DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 185 713 EC 123 523

AUTHOR Haisley, Fay; Wilhelmi, George
TITLE Administering Policy for Talented and Gifted Education. Oregon Series on Talented and Gifted Education.
INSTITUTION Northwest Regional Educational Lab., Portland, Oreg.; Oregon State Dept. of Education, Salem. Office of Talented and Gifted Education.
SPONS AGENCY Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE 79
GRANT G007800756
NOTE 46p.; For related information, see EC 123 522-531.
AVAILABLE FROM Office of Marketing, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, 710 S.W. 2nd Ave., Portland, OR 97204 ($2.95 each; $26.55 for the full set)

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS *Academically Gifted; Community Role; *Educational Administration; *Educational Policy; Elementary Secondary Education; *Gifted; Nontraditional Education; *Policy Formation; Program Development; Resource Room Programs; *Talent; Team Teaching
IDENTIFIERS Individualized Education Programs; *Oregon

ABSTRACT

Part of a 10 booklet series on talented and gifted education, the booklet discusses developing and administering policy for talented and gifted students. Some aspects to be considered before implementing a new policy are considered, including social issues, administrative concerns, trends in talented and gifted programs, and instructional provisions. The difference between policy and administrative procedures is examined, along with procedures for policy development and program development and administration. Some brief case studies illustrate problems and procedures in gifted and talented policy administration. Other aspects considered include individualized education programs, resource rooms, the community role, and alternative program options such as team teaching, demonstration classrooms, and alternative schools. A bibliography and a list of sources of information on talented and gifted are included. (DLS)

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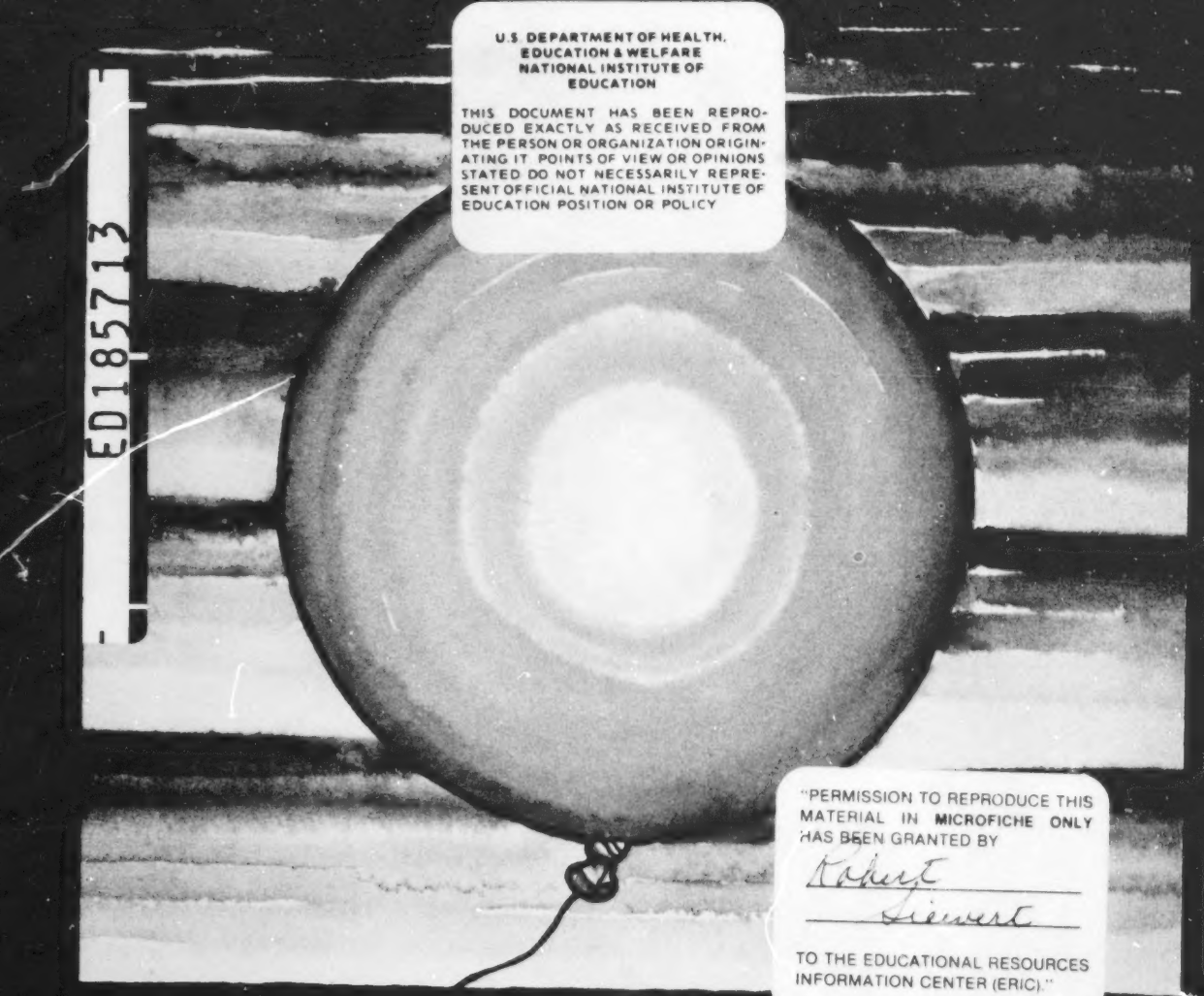

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Administering Policy for Talented and Gifted

ADMINISTERING POLICY FOR TALENTED AND GIFTED EDUCATION

Fay Haisley
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This series was cooperatively developed by the following: Project Director - Robert Siewert, Specialist, Talented and Gifted Programs, Oregon Department of Education, Salem, Oregon; Project Coordinator - Carleen Matthews, Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory; Series Editor - Candy Withycombe; and Richard Arends, University of Oregon.

Oregon Association for Talented And Gifted

Oregon State DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory

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The "Oregon Series on Talented and Gifted Education" of which this booklet is a part, was made possible with the support of the United States Office of Education, Department of Health, Education and Welfare, through grant #G007800756 to the Oregon Department of Education, Office of Talented and Gifted Education. However, the content does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of HEW, and no official endorsement of these materials should inferred.

The Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, under contract with the Oregon Department of Education, provided technical assistance in the development of the series and was granted license to publish the materials for nationwide distribution.

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Special thanks to the following reviewers who contributed helpful suggestions.

Gayle Hendrick	Beaverton, Oregon
Nancy Leahy	Gladstone, Oregon
Linda Contreras	Sacramento, California
Ronald Smith	Portland, Oregon
Patricia Pintarach	Portland, Oregon

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Sharon Torvick	Salem, Oregon
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IN THE CENTRAL OFFICE

We've heard it many times, "The board makes policy and the administration executes it." The expression is true, but it doesn't say enough. The administration does more than that. It actually puts the policymaking system into action. It makes it go. Without the leadership and support of the superintendent and without the work of a district's office staff, the school board cannot function fully as a policymaking body for talented and gifted education.

Recently during a heated school board meeting, a board member shot a question to an administrator, "You say you execute policy, does that mean you kill it?" Her comment was disgruntled, of course, but it described well the power of district administration to either enhance or stifle the work of a school board. Increasingly, school districts are realizing that school board policies emerge from an interlocking management-governance system. To operate effectively, this system requires many tasks from district administration. For example:

1. Proposal development. Before talented and gifted proposals are presented to the board for action, they must be edited into clear language, checked for adherance to state regulations and guidelines, examined for usage of the best professional practices, and then organized and typed neatly. All of these are tasks carried out by district office staff.

2. Disseminate information about policies. The district administration must disseminate information about new talented and gifted policy and administrative rules as widely as possible. It does not leave these "buried" in the board minutes.

3. Collect community and school opinion. Another district office responsibility entails making sure that people who are affected by talented and gifted policies have opportunity to express their opinions before the board makes final decisions. Administrators must exert much effort to arrange this kind of input from parents, students, teachers and community members.

4. Execute policies. The district office must coordinate building level leadership, staff development programs, curriculum planning and delivery systems, and the communication linkages between homes and schools before talented and gifted policies can be executed equitably and can become a vital factor in school governance and instruction.

5. Evaluation. The administration must see that evaluation plans are designed and implemented to inform the board about what's working and what policies need to be revised. This entails careful data collection, written reports that describe whether or not policy objectives are being achieved, and recommendations for more tenable policy.

Managing the policy development system is a big job. It takes diligent and careful work. It is a crucially important role. In fact, school districts that ignore its importance seem to be plagued by needless trouble with their talented and gifted programs. Controversy, community-school misunderstanding, and even costly litigation are the consequences of not building a mutually appreciative management governance system.

Conflict is hard enough for board members and administrators to endure. Even worse, when conflict is unresolved, it is the students who are caught in the middle. The conflict deprives them of adequate programs to develop their full abilities. The result is a violation of their legal right to an appropriate education. Our communities then lose potential leadership.

When the policy development system is well managed, then the school board and administration and community work to enhance each other. Together they provide optimum support for students' outstanding accomplishments. When this happens, it's not magic. It's the result of a lot of behind-the-scenes, hard administrative work.

IT'S THE ADMINISTRATOR THAT COUNTS

When a school district has established a new policy for talented and gifted education, then it has at that moment only a good intention. The policy won't get very far nor will it do the students or the community any good until the administrator goes into action. But before beginning to implement the new policy it's important to take a few minutes to become familiar with certain facts about talented and gifted education. We've tried to anticipate the questions which may be most important.

SOCIAL ISSUES

Is it fair to give special attention to the talented and gifted who are already "ahead"? In 1971, U.S. Commissioner of Education, Sidney P. Marland, Jr., submitted a two volume report to the Congress of the United States. In it researchers noted: "For many years, interested educators, responsible legislators and concerned parents have puzzled over the problem of educating the most gifted of our students in a public educational program geared primarily to a philosophy of egalitarianism. We know that gifted children can be identified as early as preschool grades and that these children in later life often make outstanding contributions to our society in the arts, politics, business, and the sciences. But disturbingly, research has confirmed that many talented children underachieve, performing far less than their intellectual potential might suggest."

But will talented and gifted programs create a group of elitist snobs? Research studies on special needs of the talented and gifted demonstrate the need for special programs. Contrary to widespread belief, these students cannot ordinarily excel without assistance. The relatively few gifted students who have the advantage of special programs have shown remarkable improvements in self-understanding and in ability to relate well to others, as well as in improved academic and creative performance. The programs have not produced arrogant, selfish snobs; special programs have extended a sense of reality, wholesome humility, self-respect, and respect for others.

But when budgets are tight, can't gifted kids do pretty well on their own? A summary of findings noted by Lyon (1976) indicates that quite to the contrary, a high percentage of talented and gifted youngsters are among the dropouts from school. An Iowa study revealed that 17.5 percent of the dropouts in the state were talented and gifted. This is an extremely high percentage recognizing the fact that they make up approximately three percent of the normal population. Another study of 251 high ability students found that 54.6 percent were working below a level of which they were intellectually capable. The Marland Report states: "We are increasingly being stripped of the comfortable notion that a bright mind will make its own way. On the contrary, intellectual and creative talent cannot survive educational neglect and apathy. This loss is particularly evident in the minority groups who have in both social and educational environments every configuration calculated to stifle potential talent."

Do gifted kids have a hard time getting along in the world? Studies indicate that the talented and gifted as a group generally demonstrated superior adjustment compared to the average population. They nevertheless encounter problems of anxiety, insecurity, feelings of clumsiness, inadequacy with physical tasks when

frustrated by inappropriate environments. Their desire to read incessantly and preference for self-direction, rather than direction by others, sometimes isolates them. Emphasis on individualized programs for talented and gifted students has reduced some of the pressures. Counseling provisions were noted by several administrators interviewed as a priority to assist with peer and social pressures. Awareness sessions with teachers, parents and community groups were suggested as ways to diminish psychological conflicts.

ADMINISTRATIVE CONCERNS

How shall we provide funding for talented and gifted? This was the most discussed and controversial issue. Traditionally, programs for talented and gifted students have been the first to be cut when budgets are tight. Four sources can be identified:

- Transfer of talented and gifted programs to Title IX under the federal provisions may provide additional sources of funding.
- The state legislature has provided matching funding in 1978 for districts meeting guidelines for proposed programs and it is anticipated a similar amount will be available in the next biennium.
- Some districts with persistent leadership have convinced local merchants and businessmen of the need for funding programs.

Who should administer programs at the local level? Larger school districts use personnel services for identification and placement and curriculum coordinators for program development and evaluation. In small districts the roles are not so clearly

defined. Each district should develop its own unique program based on its specific needs or problems.

Placement under special education administrators was rated high priority given the existing administrative structure in most school districts. The increasing use of resource rooms suggests the possibility of coordination by resource teachers and program coordinators to administer individual student programs and scheduling.

TRENDS IN TALENTED AND GIFTED PROGRAMS

What are educational provisions for talented and gifted? Until quite recently education of the talented and gifted has been sporadic. As a nation, we spend 43 times more on the underprivileged and 28 times more on the handicapped than on the outstanding student. Although 21 states have talented and gifted legislation, much of it scarcely goes beyond rhetoric. (Fincher, 1976)

At key times there have been waves of enthusiasm in the United States for talented and gifted students. A shortage of highly trained specialists during World War II created a rising well of concern for the training of outstanding individuals. Even more dramatic was the enormous wave of national interest in the gifted that followed in the wake of Russia's first space launching in 1957. The National Defense Education Act (1958) was clearly aimed at upgrading educational standards especially for the academically talented. In both instances, however, increased educational opportunities for the gifted can be seen as defensive reactions to national emergencies.

A question to ask 10 years in the future is whether the present wave of enthusiasm is just another knee-jerk reaction to a present national emergency.

Why a change in focus? A growing, more powerful movement led by parents and professonals stresses the right of all children to a good (appropriate) education, rather than an educaton provided to meet the needs of the state. Marland (1972) noted that:

> "Education is appropriate when it is suited to the needs of each individual student." As an idea, he said, "This is not new, but as a national goal it is just emerging in the public consciousness."

As Director of the U.S. Office for Talented/Gifted Lyon (1972) commented:

> "At present only thirteen percent of the (Nation's) two million talented and gifted youngsters receive planned, expert guidance and encouragement. The remainder, particularly those who are under constant pressure to conform are as likely as not to lead lives of bored, frustrated mediocrity, or worse, brilliant criminality."

What support has the U.S. Government given talented and gifted education? Much that has developed in present day trends for the education of the talented and gifted can be directly traced to the Marland report. A broader definition of the talented and gifted has emerged to include any or all of the following areas: General Intellectual Ability, Specific Academic Aptitude, Creativity, Leadership Ability, the Arts and Psychomotor Ability.

Figures gathered for the Marland report show a conservative estimate of three to five percent of school age youngsters who can be characterized as "gifted." On the basis of this 1970 estimate, there are between 1.5 and 2.5 million gifted students in elementary and secondary schools in the United States.

What action has the U.S. Government taken? In 1972, the USOE established an office of Talented and Gifted in the Bureau of Education for the Handicapped. The office was given official status by legislation in 1974. In October 1975, the U.S. Commissioner of Education issued a policy statement declaring that "The USOE recognizes the education of the talented and gifted as being an integral part of our educational system and supports the endeavors of all those who are involved in providing increased educational opportunities for those students."

What about staff development? The inservice training of all staff is an important element in effective programming for talented and gifted students. This should be provided at both local and state levels.

- Two workshops are held each year by the Oregon Department of Education and the Oregon Association for Talented and Gifted. Release time for teacher attendance has been suggested.

- Department of Education personnel are available on a limited basis to provide inservice sessions and can recommend available consultants as an additional resource. The Department will also work with districts on structuring staff development programs which are unique to local needs.

- Teacher Centers are being funded to provide for general inservice needs. Attention to the needs of talented and gifted will be provided when these needs are made clear.

- Several colleges and universities have developed coursework related to the talented and gifted. A masters degree will be available in fall 1978 from the University of Oregon, College of Education.

- School districts and ESDs have also developed workshops relevant to talented and gifted education.

A variety of staff development models and options is available elsewhere. Particularly important is the identification of local needs for teacher training tied to the type of programs being implemented.

How should programs be evaluated? Programs operating with matching funds support from the Department of Education are required to meet evaluation criteria as specified in the Oregon Administrative Rules.

Evaluation should be both formative and summative. Accountability for programs at the district or local level, however, should be clearly delineated in program proposals, and the personnel responsible should also be identified. Several evaluation models are available including the Renzulli (1975) model which has proven effective for a variety of projects.

Personnel interviewed indicated strong support for constant monitoring and reviewing. This would require advisory groups to maintain regular contact once programs are under way, and to maintain flexible scheduling for program needs. Student, teacher and parent checklists were suggested to provide feedback during the program related to, for example, program quality, the relevancy of student goals and objectives, the availability of support services, and general curriculum provisions.

INSTRUCTIONAL PROVISIONS

What programs should be developed? Program criteria were reviewed under the heading "Oregon Statewide Policy on Talented and Gifted Education." Personnel interviewed were strongly of the opinion that even

though state guidelines had been provided, those at the local level should be responsible for developing programs related to the unique needs of both students and individual situations.

The term "differentiated programming" is commonly used in relationship to the development of Individualized Educational Programs for students within the framework of the school curriculum offerings. Increased emphasis is also being placed on the development of school/community based involvement of resources in elementary school and the increased use of mentorships at the secondary level.

The concern that was generally expressed was that of ensuring provision of programs beyond minimal levels. Careful attention to staff development and the restructuring of administrative procedures and schedules were given highest priority.

HOW IS POLICY DISTINCT FROM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES?

The people of Oregon are demanding that their school boards provide quality programs and efficiency in school operations. Educators are constantly reminded that through taxes paid to local, state and federal governments, the people invest vast sums into public education. They expect results from their investment. This is, indeed, a tall order. School board policies provide the motive force for meeting these expectations.

WHAT GOOD ARE POLICIES FOR GIFTED EDUCATION?

Policy development involves many political and social forces beyond the school boards' control. Some people are calling for further expansion of services to handicapped or disadvantaged students. Others desire more attention to basic skills and general education. Still others are urging an entire reorganization of school processes. Much of the public says we must cut back and curb inflationary trends with constrained spending and balanced budgeting. Within each force we hear an appeal that is earnest and sensitive to authentic need. Each appeal describes factors that ultimately affect us all.

Each appeal is grounded in people's desire for an educational system which is effective while compassionate and feasible.

The answer is not the simple one of making other forces wrong ("outdated," "too expensive," "undemocratic,"

etc.) in order to support our cause. Instead, policy makers must consider the interplay of these political forces and then create policies for talented and gifted children that reflect our best intent for all individual students and our best regard for emergent leadership in our communities and society. This is a complicated task that requires maturity and productive ideas to answer an array of difficult questions. The task, itself, is an excellent testimony to the need for educated leadership. In this context, policy development is the key responsibility of school boards. Written policies which reflect the best thinking of the local community make the tough work of school management and governance possible. Continuously updated policies are essential to soundly organized and efficiently operated talented and gifted programs.

WHAT DO GOOD POLICIES ACCOMPLISH?

- Written policies inform everyone about the boards' intent for gifted education.
- They establish a legal record which is crucial for those policies that reflect the force of law.
- They are objective, making arbitrary administration difficult.
- They provide continuity and balance. Board members, central staff and teachers may come and leave. The written policies for talented and gifted education endure and can help smooth transitions when changes occur.
- They give the public a means to evaluate the boards' stand toward talented and gifted education. Publicly pronounced policy statements prove that the board is willing to be

held accountable for its decisions regarding talented and gifted education.

- They help disarm eccentric critics. "Off-the-wall" accusations against gifted education seldom last in districts that have clear-cut and timely written policies that reflect thorough research and careful planning for talented and gifted programs.

HOW IS POLICY DEVELOPED?

The formulation of district policy for talented and gifted will largely be determined by state and federal guidelines. Oregon Administrative Rules provide mandatory guidelines for programs receiving state funding.

The issues discussed in the previous chapters reflect the general concerns of the public and professional clients of a school district. It is essential that these issues be addressed and documented. Policy statements are then drafted and accepted in conjunction with administrative procedures for program operation. With this process all parties have a clear understanding of district intent.

HOW IS POLICY DIFFERENT FROM ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES?

On the following page, a diagram of three levels of program development may be helpful to distinguish among steps which require a knowledge base, a policy decision or those which relate to administrative procedures.

KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge does not require policy to be established. It is information that people collect in order to describe:

1.1 The awareness of student needs

1.2 The characteristics and traits of talented and gifted students

1.3 Existing district resources which may be reallocated for talented and gifted students

1.4 Program options which could be developed

INTERPRETATION OF POLICY MAKING

Does require policy to be formulated about:

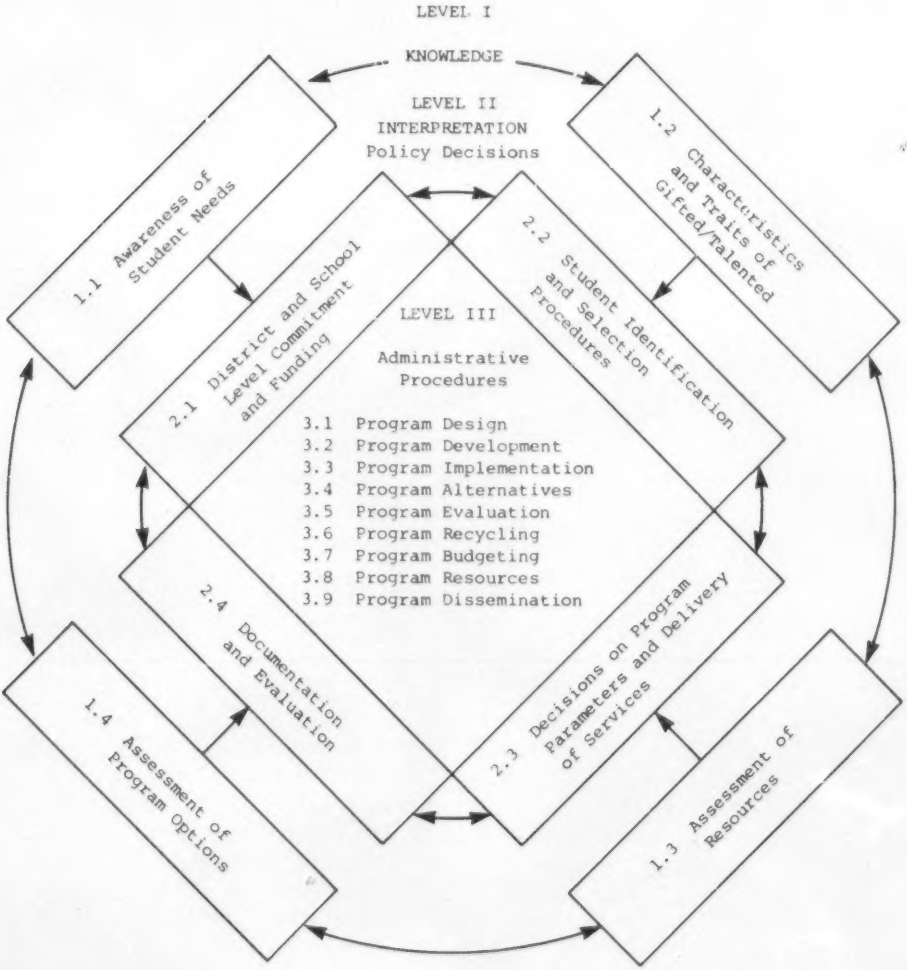
2.1 District and school level commitment to meeting the needs of talented and gifted students. This is usually a general philosophical statement but to be implemented effectively it must also have the "teeth" of a funding commitment.

2.2 Student identification and selection procedures. This is an important policy decision as it relates to the number of children who will be involved, their characteristics, and how they will be selected.

2.3 Program Parameters and Delivery of Services. Closely linked to the identification and selection procedures is the need for policy statements regarding the type of program to be provided based on district and school level philosophy and resources. Alternatives for providing differentiated program provisions for talented and gifted students will also need to be clearly identified. While there is always some need for flexibility within a prescribed set of policies, a clear understanding of how talented and gifted students will be served is necessary to reduce ambiguity and ensure that the needs of students are met.

FIGURE I

GIFTED AND TALENTED PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT



2.4 Documentation and Evaluation. It has been established that successful projects have identified formative and summative evaluation procedures at the beginning of program development and been responsive to evaluation data. Policy related to the type of data to be collected, methods of data collection, and reporting procedures should be developed early. Renzulli's (1975) data matrix has proven effective, is widely used, and should be considered as a model.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT AND ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

It will be much less difficult to identify and implement administrative procedures if each of the steps on the two previous levels has been completed. Administrative procedures will need to be established for:

3.1 Program Design - who will be responsible?

3.2 Program Development - who will be involved, and which model(s) will be used?

3.3 Program Implementation - how will services be provided, who will provide them, and when?

3.4 Program Alternatives - how will individual student programs be differentiated?

3.5 Program Evaluation - how will data be collected, analyzed and reported?

3.6 Program Recycling - how will the program remain flexible and responsive to evaluation data?

3.7 Program Budgeting - how can the program be organized to operate effectively within established funding levels?

3.8 Program Resources - how will resources, personnel, space and time be allocated, assigned, maintained and improved (e.g., inservice)?

3.9 Program Dissemination - how will students, staff, parents and community work together to ensure that program information is made public and encourages increased commitment?

CASE STUDIES: PROBLEMS AND PROCEDURES

In a recent state survey of 217 rural and large metropolitan districts (June 1978), fifty-five percent said that their problems were: insufficient funds, insufficient personnel, lack of trained personnel, limited physical space and lack of time for training and development.

Oregon administrators and board members who were interviewed in August 1978 indicated that the major causes of administrative "crises" in talented and gifted programs were: funding, ambiguity between policies and program administration, lack of community endorsement, and communication problems.

We all know that some of these examples are likely to develop in most programs. The intent is not to indicate that disagreements will always result in negative reactions. However it would appear that programs for gifted students engender more than their fair share of hostility. Crises situations can develop and reach unreasonable proportions very quickly. When this happens, it is the students who are most short changed. One district representative commented that those involved with programs for talented and gifted students should continually stress positive aspects that programs provide. This creates a balanced perspective. Some examples follow which show how districts met and resolved their problems.

FUNDING CRISES

One larger metropolitan district was faced with a funding squeeze. Interest in talented and gifted students had been building over a period of 2-3 years and a committee had been established by the school board to reach needs and program concerns. As a result, the school board adopted a policy statement strongly supporting the value of programs for talented and gifted students. The crisis arose when a program proposal was prepared and the school board asked for permission to submit it for Oregon Department of Education review. A matching funds budget figure was included in the report. At first reading the members of the school board considered the matching funding too expensive and voted against forwarding the proposal.

The crisis occurred when parent and community support was activated on behalf of talented and gifted students. Detailed information was provided and personal calls were made to school board members about the need for a talented and gifted program in their district. Further evidence of support for such a program was voiced by a large group of parents and community representatives when the program was presented at the next board meeting. The board voted to accept the program and provide matching funds. The question of financial squeeze may be resolved when community supporters urge ways to utilize community resources and learning sites to cut costs.

In one small school district the problem was not resolved. A talented and gifted program had been developed and accepted by the school board. The administration was very pleased because the board passed the budget on its first presentation and this seemed to indicate strong support. However, the total budget was rejected by the local electors. At a budgetary review session the talented and gifted program was deleted. The district has retained "seed

money" of $1,000 in the budget primarily for inservice. They plan to try again the next year and seek community support for the program.

COMMUNICATIONS BREAKDOWN

Awareness sessions had been held with faculty and staff and they had agreed to be involved with evaluation procedures. The major problem became the use of a student identification check list. At the elementary level the process was completed by having each classroom teacher complete the check list for those children being recommended. This was not an overwhelming task as a policy had been established requiring only the top three percent of students who were academically gifted be identified. Classroom teachers had one, two, or at most three children involved. The problem arose at the secondary level. The administrative process broke down because secondary teachers who were facing 100-150 students per day were overwhelmed with the paper work. It was resolved in two ways: first, aides and community representatives tallied responses and eased the teachers' burden. Second, by using alternative identification procedures suggested by the staff the process become manageable.

Another problem arose out of a communication breakdown between the board and the administration. Because of imprecise policy statements and misinterpretation of the intent and extent of the policies there was a problem of translation into program procedures. The problem was resolved by a third party consultant who was able to mediate the differences of approach, rewrite the policy statements to be more explicit, and suggest program leadership be transferred to another administrative area.

There is no guarantee that even the most careful program planning, coordination, and administration will avoid some crisis situations. Programming for talented and gifted students is a complex task. In the interest of students, however, success is worth the diligence and hard work.

SCHOOL BOARD AND ADMINISTRATIVE RELATIONSHIPS

The school board reflects the community's concerns. It is increasingly evident that parents of talented and gifted students are demanding more educational opportunities for their children. Coupled with this parent demand is the recent funding for talented and gifted students by the Oregon State Legislature which reflects state concern. These two significant trends may provide impetus for more school boards to put funding support behind their policies.

When budgets are small, school boards have difficulty allocating funds between the many genuine program needs and concerns in each district. Strong pressures are currently being applied, for example, for the rights of handicapped students under the mandate of P. L. 94-142. The task of allocating funds fairly is not easy. In this past year in several school districts, however, school board members have been surprised by the strength of community support for talented and gifted students. They have provided funding for programs that had previously been given a low funding priority.

When school boards provide the policies for talented and gifted programs, it is the responsibility of administrators to ensure budget accountability and well designed and implemented programs.

Because of the uniqueness of individual needs the goals for students in talented and gifted programs should:

1. Provide for the acquisition of basic skills and advanced learning appropriate to the unique learning rates and levels of the talented and gifted.

2. Provide talented and gifted students with opportunities to develop the behavior and skills necessary for self-directed learning in one's total environment.

3. Provide opportunities for the talented and gifted to explore indepth special interest topics and/or ideas.

4. Develop small group or individual experiences for the talented and gifted which provide for their unique needs and personal growth of attitudes, appreciation, and feelings.

INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATIONAL PLANNING (IEP'S)

The IEP has come to the notice of educators in relationship to programs for handicapped learners under P.L. 94-142. The guidelines for IEP development have been deemed suitably appropriate for the differentiated programming requirements of talented and gifted students.

In preparing IEP's the Oregon State Plan for Talented and Gifted (1976) states that: Differentiated educational programs for able and gifted children should provide opportunities to:

1. Acquire basic skills and explore more advanced ideas and issues earlier than their age mates.

2. Study subject matter in greater depth, or perform at a higher level or skill.

3. Satisfy their unusually high desire for self-fulfillment and the benefit of society.

4. Find productive ways of expressing their unusual talents and capacity for versatility.

5. Receive special guidance in making choices and plans appropriate to their different rates of personal growth and development.

6. Be exposed to a wide variety of demanding learning experiences in and out of a formal school setting.

IEP guidelines include the following elements:

1. A statement of the present level of the student's educational performance.

2. A statement of the annual goals including short term objectives.

3. A statement of the specific educational services to be provided and the extent to which the student will be able to participate in regular programs.

4. The projected dates for initiation of such services and their anticipated duration.

5. Appropriate objective criteria, evaluative procedures and schedules for determining whether instructional objectives have been met.

RESOURCE ROOMS

Resource rooms are regaining popularity as an administrative arrangement to provide for the unique needs of learners across the continuum from handicapped to talented and gifted.

Renzulli's (1977) Enrichment Triad Model with its three step curricular format has been used successfully as the basis for organizing resource rooms for talented and gifted students.

The Learning Center/Resource Room can be defined as a location specially designed for study or activities beyond what is provided in the regular classroom. The Resource Room can provide space for small groups, or individual instruction offering a one-to-one ratio of teacher, mentor, or tutor with the gifted student. The main criteria for successful operation of a Resource Room should be provision for the unique instructional needs of the program participants. The quality of the experiences provided will depend in large part on the skills and expertise of the teachers selected to implement the program.

ALTERNATIVE PROGRAM OPTIONS

Large school districts often have an array of administrative options available for programming provisions for talented and gifted students. Smaller districts, however, may be limited to one or two options.

The grouping options listed may provide guidance in the selection of alternatives.

1. Cluster grouping within the regular class - procedures which allow talented and gifted students with similar interests, abilities or instructional needs to work together within class or grade level.

2. Special/regular classes - 1/2 hour to 3 hour classes which meet 1 to 5 days per week to which the talented and gifted goes from his/her assigned class. These classes can be taught by regular staff members, talented and gifted specialists, reading teacher, or by other qualified personnel. Programs of this type are sometimes known as "80-20 pull-out" or similar terms because students remain in their regular classroom for 80 percent of the time and leave for enriched educational experiences for 20 percent of the school day/week.

3. Team Teaching - plans which utilize any teaching arrangement so that talented and gifted students work with one teacher while the remainder of the class is with the other(s).

4. Alternative Schools - placement in alternative programs specifically designed for talented and gifted students or which are designed to emphasize a specific skill - arts, divergent thinking, creativity.

5. Demonstration Classroom - full or part-time placement in a supervised, coordinated program which emphasizes individualized learning programs with trained or professional supervision.

6. Itinerant or Resource Teacher - programs which use program options listed and taught by a gifted specialist. Care must be given so that the specialist has appropriate time for instruction, planning and coordination with regular class teachers.

7. Field trips and attendance at cultural events - only a part of total program for talented and gifted which makes provision for their visits to and participation in available community programs.

WHAT DOES THE COMMUNITY GET OUT OF THIS?

The community plays a vital and crucial support role in an educational plan for talented and gifted students. There is increased movement toward strong parent advisory and advocacy groups involving them in the decision making process. Parent training is going beyond awareness levels to training in actual techniques for individualizing education. Parents can assist in secretarial services, administrative organizations of parent groups, transportation, library services, volunteer aides in special subjects, arranging for outside speakers, guest presentations and workshops of specialization, orientation meetings for all parents, public relations with parents, schools, community and press.

CITIZENS HELP IMPLEMENT PROGRAMS

A community organization recently formed in one Oregon city, for example, supports and promotes efforts to develop and expand local opportunities for talented and gifted children and has conducted a fossil hunt to a coastal beach during the summer.

There are many other ways in which parents and community personnel can lend important support and services to programs for the talented and gifted. In a Washington state program, for instance, the work of talented and gifted students in language arts and art is systematically evaluated by the classroom teacher and a panel of members from the community such as university professors and professional artists.

An Oregon school district is coordinating a community-wide mentor network to assist talented and gifted students. The program will operate from a central facility serving all talented and gifted students and building level talented and gifted programs in the district. In an attempt to maximize their effectiveness, identified mentors will be specially trained to work with talented and gifted students and the progress monitored of each student/mentor relationship.

National Commission on Resources for Youth, Inc., a New York based organization, has been working with school systems and other agencies for over 10 years to provide learning opportunities in the community. Their programs have involved a wide variety of skilled and professional community personnel. They suggest the ideal mentor is someone who is:

1. Interested in the student as a learner and individual with a mutual interest in subject
2. Usually older than student and with a special vocation or a vocation that learner is interested in
3. Able to guide learner in experiences
4. Flexible
5. A role model

In 1969, a Newark, N.J. program for the talented and gifted set a goal to prepare inner city children for college. An advisory board of educators from high schools and colleges and people from the business community was established. The high school and college personnel developed curriculum for the program and teachers then requested assistance from the business personnel with resources and expertise. Actuaries at the Prudential Life Insurance Company developed a course in statistics which they taught to the students over a one month period. Students who expressed an interest in a math career could study "actuarial" math

at the Prudential headquarters. Students were given privileges. The course involved an actuary and classroom teacher working together on a four week course with four days a week of students' time spent at Prudential and one day a week on site visits to various organizations with math orientation.

Mentorship programs give students a chance to explore in depth a subject they are interested in with community members who have expressed a willingness to become involved in this kind of educational alternative for the gifted. As one student has commented, a mentorship experience gave her,"... more responsibility, social awareness, self-esteem, maturity and knowledge unobtainable in a school building."

STUDENT SUPPORT POLICIES

Sometimes community members need only become minimally involved in order to effect the development of a talented and gifted child or program. A town mayor, upon learning of a campaign started by a boy of 11 to convert an empty downtown lot into a baseball field, voiced his support. The mayor's and other civic leaders' backing helped convince a city commissioner to reconsider the boy's recommendation he had previously turned down.

Students themselves often help to support and implement policies for the talented and gifted. Some talented and gifted students involved in mentorship programs become mentors to other students. One 13 year old boy with love of animals regularly met with a veterinarian who gave him reading assignments and took him along to observe hospital procedure. The boy went on to teach pet nutrition and dissection of small animals to six students at his school.

Peer nomination is often effectively used to help identify other talented and gifted students. In some instances, this can be as reliable as teacher nominations. In a book written by 20 teenage gifted students, the value of special programs as viewed by the participants and their support for this kind of learning experience is expressed:

> "In the fifth grade, I once engaged in a one-to-one tutorial experience which was very rewarding. The teacher was a really dynamic guy at the Maryland Academy of Sciences who taught me basic computer science techniques..."

> "An independent study program is definitely an asset, since it allows freedom to work on what you want and at what speed you wish. For instance, I am currently monitoring the pollution level of local streams and rivers. This is especially gratifying because the data actually does some good....Working for a high grade is not nearly as exciting as seeing your work help others. It's really a great personal lift."

The following quotation shows how one student successfully helped to implement a new policy at his school:

> "Having already taken every course in the sciences and related areas offered by my school by the eleventh grade, I was forced to search elsewhere for additional projects and learning experiences. The first step was to let my concern be known to the school....After expressing interest in attending a certain local college, I got a school recommendation, gathered my transcripts and visited the man in charge of adult night classes. As a result, I

received a scholarship of $250 for a semester-long biology course."

A final quote indicates, perhaps, the feelings and thinking of many students who have been involved in effective programs for the talented and gifted:

"It was one of the most enriching classroom situations I have ever encountered and I would jump at the opportunity to do it again."

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